

Wayne Allard

U . S . S E N A T O R • C O L O R A D O



For Release:
February 14, 2002

Contact: Sean Conway
(202) 224-6207
Kelly Brady
(202) 224-5946

ALLARD MILITARY VOTER AMENDMENT PASSED BY SENATE AMENDMENT IMPROVES VOTING STANDARDS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

Washington, D.C. – The U.S. Senate Wednesday approved an amendment offered by U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) which would enhance the voting ability of absentee military voters. Senator Allard's amendment, The Military Voter Amendment, would strengthen military personnel's ability to vote by addressing many of the problems which impede their ability to cast a vote or have that vote counted while serving their country in the military. The amendment was approved unanimously by the Senate and added to the bi-partisan election reform bill.

"At the very moment we are asking our service men and women to win the war on terrorism we need to ensure they will continue to enjoy the same rights and freedoms they dedicate their lives to protecting," Allard said following the Senate's vote on his amendment. "This amendment will help ensure that our men and women in uniform do not have their right to vote questioned or even compromised while they are serving our country in uniform."

The amendment was co-sponsored by U.S. Senators George Allen (R-VA), Thad Cochran (R-MS), Susan Collins (R-ME), Phil Gramm (R-TX), Richard Lugar (R-IN), Bob Smith (R-NH) and Pat Roberts (R-KS).

Allard's Military Voter Amendment would require the following:

- 1) Prohibit a state from disqualifying a ballot based upon lack of postmark or witness signature alone, for lacking a notarized signature, address, foreign postmark, or reasonably similar signatures.
- 2) Military voters who are discharged and move before an election but after the residency deadline cannot vote through the military absentee ballot system, and sometimes are not able to fulfill deadlines to establish residency in a State. This amendment would allow them to register through the absentee process and vote in person at their new polling site.
- 3) Prohibit states from denying a military ballot because it is mailed in too early.
- 4) Language directing the DoD to mail a copy of current military voter laws to every state to be distributed to each voting jurisdiction.

"I hope this action by the Senate demonstrates to our service men and women we value their service to our country and we want to ensure their voice is heard at the ballot box," concluded Allard.

###

